



Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 11/5/24 at 9:00 a.m.

Objective

Provide information to the Water Operations Management Team (WOMT), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and California Department of Water Resources (DWR) on measures to reduce adverse effects from Delta operations of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and the State Water Project (SWP) on salmonids and green sturgeon. Final versions of the Proposed Action Assessment, and Fish and Water Operations Outlook will be posted to Reclamation's Delta Monitoring Work Group webpage, while final version of the Meeting Notes will be posted to Reclamation's Salmon Monitoring Team webpage. Meeting participants include representatives from: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), DWR, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Reclamation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Participants

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Kearns & West (K&W)

Announcements

- CDFW will share the Final 2024 State Water Project Incidental Take Permit (ITP) with SaMT members. The current IOP will be in effect for COA 8.3 through December 20th.

Part 1. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

Relevant Actions & Triggers

- The Interim Operations Plan (IOP) is currently in effect resulting from a court order issued on 4/1/2024 and in effect until 12/20/2024. Reclamation shall adopt the following provisions of the SWP ITP:
 - 8.5.2 Larval and Juvenile Delta Smelt Protection
 - 8.6.1 Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.2 Early-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Discrete Daily Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.3 Mid- and Late-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Daily Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.4 Daily Spring-run Chinook Salmon Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold
 - 8.7 OMR Flexibility During Delta Excess Conditions
 - 8.8 End of OMR Management
- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3):** See Outlook and Assessment for more information.
- **ITP Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.1):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.1 of the ITP. These values are based on the juvenile production estimate (JPE). The final JPE for brood year 2024 natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon will be determined early next year. The thresholds below will be based on the final JPE.
- The ITP natural-origin Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of unclipped length-at-date (LAD) winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 1.17% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE (loss \geq N/A). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss \geq N/A), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -3,500 cfs. If 75% of this threshold is exceeded (loss \geq N/A), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,500 cfs. If 100% of this threshold is exceeded (loss \geq N/A), the required response is to immediately convene SaMT to review recent fish distribution information and operations and provide advice regarding future planned Project operations to minimize subsequent loss during that year. The JPE has not yet been calculated for WY 2025; therefore, threshold values are not yet available but natural-origin winter-run loss is still being tracked until these thresholds are determined.
- The ITP hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of clipped LAD winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 0.12% of the winter-run Chinook salmon hatchery-origin JPE (loss \geq N/A). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss \geq N/A), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -3,500 cfs. If 75% of this threshold is exceeded (loss \geq N/A), the

required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,500 cfs. The JPE has not yet been calculated for WY 2025 and hatchery-origin winter-run Chinook salmon have not been released yet in WY 2025; therefore, threshold values are not yet available for hatchery-origin winter-run loss.

Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations

SaMT reviewed and updated the Outlook document. The updated Outlook document will be shared with SaMT via SharePoint link by close of business (COB) 11/6/24. Additional details and operations context shared at the 11/5/24 meeting include:

- The Lower Feather rotary screw trap is anticipated to begin trapping on 11/24/24.
- San Joaquin River flows were around 2,371 cfs on 11/4/24 and will continue to decrease as pulses from the Stanislaus River and other rivers conclude. Baseline flow will likely stay in the low 1,000 cfs range.
- Stanislaus River releases are currently 500 cfs and are expected to decrease with the end of fall pulse flow.
- Delta Outflow remains close to the 4,500 cfs flow objective and is expected to remain stable as flows decrease.
- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are at 3,200 cfs as of 11/5/24 and are expected to decrease as other rivers decrease.
- QWEST is in the range of +2,000 cfs and will continue to decrease.
- Rio Vista flows are approximately 4,000 cfs and are expected to remain relatively stable.
- X2 is upstream of Collinsville at >81 km and should climb over the course of additional tidal cycles.
- CVP share of San Luis Reservoir storage is approximately 731 TAF as of 11/4/24.
- Jones Pumping Plant release is 3,500 cfs as of and will remain stable going forward.
- Questions on Operations:
 - Will the tidal cycle go from spring to neap?
 - The cycle will transition to a neap in the next seven days or so.

SaMT Estimates of Fish Distribution

SaMT estimates of the current distribution of listed Chinook salmon and CCV steelhead, as a percentage of each population, are based on recent monitoring data and historical migration timing patterns. Estimates this week are based on YOY winter-run and YOY spring-run as well as natural origin steelhead at the real-time monitoring locations. These estimates are reported in the final Assessment document, available on the Delta Monitoring Workgroup webpage.

Table 1. Fish Distribution Table

Location	Yet to Enter Delta	In the Delta	Exited the Delta
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 98-99% Last week: 98-99%	Current: 1-2% Last week: 1-2%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: N/A Last week: N/A	Current: N/A Last week: N/A	Current: N/A Last week: N/A
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%

Justification for Fish Distribution Figures

- YOY winter-run Chinook salmon
 - None observed the week of 10/29/2024.
- YOY spring-run Chinook salmon
 - None observed as of 11/4/24.
- YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon
 - None have been released as of 11/5/24.
- Natural origin steelhead
 - None observed as of 11/5/24.

Part 2: Open Discussion on Species Status

American River Updates

- The carcass survey on the American River for the week of 10/27/24 counted 41 carcasses to date. There are a total of 11 redds in the river. Average temperatures were around 16°C, similar to the week prior.
- Dissolved oxygen (DO) levels have increased at the Nimbus Hatchery and fall-run spawning began on 10/31/24. There were no females spawned.
- The WOMT discussed the power bypass for the week of 10/27/24. Reclamation is willing to continue to evaluate conditions and to potentially continue the bypass past 11/9/24 if conditions worsen.

Salvage Update

- There were no species pertaining to SaMT collected in salvage this week. CDFW noted unusual operational conditions over the week of 10/27/24.

- At the CVP facility on 10/30/24, the 02:00 count was missed due to high weed influx at facility and lack of staff to run the count at the same time. Reclamation believes the weed influx was likely due to removal of temporary rock barriers.
- On 11/4/24, CVP exports decreased to zero cfs and no fish counts were conducted between 12:30 and 16:30 for unknown reasons.
- Staff at the Skinner Fish Facility requested a 45-minute count during the period that covers the daylight savings time change. A 30-minute count which is technically below the 25% salvage monitoring that is in the 2008 Biological Opinion. A reminder will be sent for next year.
- CDFW requested DWR to add White Sturgeon to the daily salvage report. A new format of salvage report from Skinner Fish Facility, with an additional column, will be used starting in early December.

Hatchery and Collection Facility Operations

- N/A

Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

Proposed Action Assessment

- SaMT reviewed and updated the current week's Proposed Action Assessment document. The updated Proposed Action Assessment will be available to SaMT on SharePoint by COB 11/5/24. The final assessment will be posted to Reclamation's Delta Monitoring Workgroup webpage.

ITP Risk Assessment

- The updated draft ITP Risk Assessment will be distributed via email by COB 11/5/24 for review by SaMT members with comments due by COB 11/7/24. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by COB on 11/8/24 and can be found on CDFW's Water Project Operations webpage.
- Reclamation and CDFW may give a presentation to share any new changes with the ITP and the new Record of Decision (ROD).
- Entrainment into the Central Delta remains the same for spring-run Chinook salmon. Exposure risk is low for both species and not many are expected in the Central Delta.
- The STARS model is predicting about 20% entrainment into the Georgiana Slough and the DCC gates.
- The overall entrainment risk in the Central Delta for winter-run Chinook salmon increased to Medium.
- Facilities entrainment risk remains the same as last week.

Items to Raise to WOMT

- N/A

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 11/12/24 at 9 a.m.

Action Item

- N/A